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THE FRAGMENTS OF EMPEDOCLES.¹

ON NATURE.

To His Friend.

1.

Hear thou, Pausanias, son of wise Anchitus!

Limitations of Knowledge.

2.

For narrow through their members scattered ways
Of knowing lie. And many a vile surprise
Blunts soul and keen desire. And having viewed
Their little share of life, with briefest fates,
Like smoke they are lifted up and flit away,
Believing only what each chances on,
Hither and thither driven; yet they boast
The larger vision of the whole and all.
But thuswise never shall these things be seen,
Never be heard by men, nor seized by mind;
And thou, since hither now withdrawn apart,
Shalt learn—no more than mortal ken may span.

3.

Shelter these teachings in thine own mute breast.

4.

But turn their madness, Gods! from tongue of mine,
And drain through holy lips the well-spring clear!
And many-wooded, O white-armed Maiden-Muse,
Thee I approach: O drive and send to me
Meek Piety's well-reined chariot of song,

¹ Based on Diels's text of 1906. This translation will appear shortly in book form with notes and introduction.

So far as lawful is for men to hear,
 Whose lives are but a day. Nor shall desire
 To pluck the flowers of fame and wide report
 Among mankind impel thee on to dare
 Speech beyond holy bound and seat profane
 Upon those topmost pinnacles of Truth.
 But come, by every way of knowing see
 How each thing is revealed. Nor, having sight,
 Trust sight no more than hearing will bear out,
 Trust echoing ear but after tasting tongue;
 Nor check the proof of all thy members aught:
 Note by all ways each thing as 'tis revealed.

5.

Yea, but the base distrust the High and Strong;
 Yet know the pledges that our Muse will urge,
 When once her words be sifted through thy soul.

The Elements.

6.

And first the fourfold root of all things hear!—
 White gleaming Zeus, life-bringing Here, Dis,
 And Nestis whose tears bedew mortality.

7.

The uncreated elements.

Birth and Death.

8.

More will I tell thee too: there is no birth
 Of all things mortal, nor end in ruinous death;
 But mingling only and interchange of mixed
 There is, and birth is but its name with men.

9.

But when in man, wild beast, or bird, or bush,
 These elements commingle and arrive
 The realms of light, the thoughtless deem it "birth";
 When they dispart, 'tis "doom of death;" and though
 Not this the Law, I too assent to use.

10.

Avenging Death.

Ex nihilo nihil.

11.

Fools! for their thoughts are briefly brooded o'er
 Who trust that what is not can e'er become,
 Or aught that is can wholly die away.

12.

From what-is-not what-is can ne'er become;
 So that what-is should e'er be all destroyed,
 No force could compass and no ear hath heard—
 For there 'twill be forever where 'tis set.

The Plenum.

13.

The All hath neither Void nor Overflow.

14.

But with the All there is no Void, so whence
 Could aught of more come nigh?

Our Elements Immortal.

15.

No wise man dreams such folly in his heart,
 That only whilst we live what men call life
 We have our being and take our good and ill,
 And ere as mortals we compacted be,
 And when as mortals we be loosed apart,
 We are as nothing.

Love and Hate, the Everlasting.

16.

For even as Love and Hate were strong of yore,
 They shall have their hereafter; nor I think
 Shall endless Age be emptied of these Twain.

The Cosmic Process.

17.

I will report a twofold truth. Now grows
 The One from Many into being, now
 Even from the One disparting come the Many.
 Twofold the birth, twofold the death of things:

For, now, the meeting of the Many brings
 To birth and death; and, now, whatever grew
 From out their sundering, flies apart and dies.
 And this long interchange shall never end.
 Whiles into One do all through Love unite;
 Whiles too the same are rent through hate of Strife.
 And in so far as is the One still wont
 To grow from Many, and the Many, again,
 Spring from primeval scattering of the One,
 So far have they a birth and mortal date;
 And in so far as the long interchange
 Ends not, so far forever established gods
 Around the circle of the world they move.
 But come! but hear my words! For knowledge gained
 Makes strong thy soul. For as before I spake,
 Naming the utter goal of these my words,
 I will report a twofold truth. Now grows
 The One from Many into being, now
 Even from the One disparting come the Many,—
 Fire, Water, Earth and awful heights of Air;
 And shut from them apart, the deadly Strife
 In equipoise, and Love within their midst
 In all her being in length and breadth the same.
 Behold her now with mind, and sit not there
 With eyes astonished, for 'tis she inborn
 Abides established in the limbs of men.
 Through her they cherish thoughts of love, through her
 Perfect the works of concord, calling her
 By name Delight or Aphrodite clear.
 She speeds revolving in the elements,
 But this no mortal man hath ever learned—
 Hear thou the undelusive course of proof:
 Behold those elements own equal strength
 And equal origin; each rules its task;
 And unto each its primal mode; and each
 Prevailing conquers with revolving time.
 And more than these there is no birth nor end;
 For were they wasted ever and evermore,
 They were no longer, and the great All were then
 How to be plenished and from what far coast?
 And how, besides, might they to ruin come,

Since nothing lives that empty is of them?—
 No, these are all, and, as they course along
 Through one another, now this, now that is born—
 And so forever down Eternity.

18.

Love.

19.

Firm-clasping Lovingness.

Love and Hate in the Organic World.

20.

The world-wide warfare of the eternal Two
 Well in the mass of human limbs is shown:
 Whiles into one do they through Love unite,
 And mortal members take the body's form,
 And life doth flower at the prime; and whiles,
 Again dissevered by the Hates perverse,
 They wander far and wide and up and down
 The surf-swept beaches and drear shores of life.
 So too with thicket, tree, and gleaming fish
 Housed in the crystal walls of waters wide;
 And so with beasts that couch on mountain slopes,
 And water-fowls that skim the long blue sea.

From the Elements is All We See.

21

But come, and to my words foresaid look well,
 If their wide witness anywhere forgot
 Aught that behooves the elemental forms:
 Behold the Sun, the warm, the bright-diffused;
 Behold the eternal Stars, forever steeped
 In liquid heat and glowing radiance; see
 Also the Rain, obscure and cold and dark,
 And how from Earth streams forth the Green and Firm.
 And all through Wrath are split to shapes diverse;
 And each through Love draws near and yearns for each.
 For from these elements hath budded all
 That was or is or evermore shall be—
 All trees, and men and women, beasts and birds,
 And fishes nourished in deep waters, aye,

The long-lived gods, in honors excellent.
 For these are all, and, as they course along
 Through one another, they take new faces all,
 By varied mingling and enduring change.

Similia similibus.

22.

For amber Sun and Earth and Heaven and Sea
 Is friendly with its every part that springs,
 Far driven and scattered, in the mortal world ;
 So too those things that are most apt to mix
 Are like, and love by Aphrodite's hest.
 But hostile chiefly are those things which most
 From one another differ, both in birth,
 And in their mixing and their molded forms—
 Unwont to mingle, miserable and lone,
 After the counsels of their father, Hate.

An Analogy.

23.

And even as artists—men who know their craft
 Through wits of cunning—paint with streak and hue
 Bright temple-tablets, and will seize in hand
 The oozy poisons pied and red and gold
 (Mixing harmonious, now more, now less),
 From which they fashion forms innumerable,
 And like to all things, peopling a fresh world
 With trees, and men and women, beasts and birds,
 And fishes nourished in deep waters, aye,
 And long-lived gods in honors excellent:
 Just so (and let no guile deceive thy breast),
 Even so the spring of mortal things, leastwise
 Of all the host born visible to man.
 O guard this knowledge well, for thou hast heard
 In this my song the Goddess and her tale.

The Speculative Thinker.

24.

To join together diverse peaks of thought,
 And not complete one road that has no turn.

An Aphorism.

25.

What must be said, may well be said twice o'er.

The Law of the Elements.

26.

In turn they conquer as the cycles roll,
 And wane the one to other still, and wax
 The one to other in turn by olden Fate;
 For these are all, and, as they course along
 Through one another, they become both men
 And multitudinous tribes of hairy beasts;
 Whiles in fair order through Love united all,
 Whiles rent asunder by the hate of Strife,
 Till they, when grown into the One and All
 Once more, once more go under and succumb.
 And in so far as is the One still wont
 To grow from Many, and the Many, again,
 Spring from primeval scattering of the One,
 So far have they a birth and mortal date.
 And in so far as this long interchange
 Ends not, so far forever established gods
 Around the circle of the world they move.

The Sphere.

27.

There views one not the swift limbs of the Sun,
 Nor there the strength of shaggy Earth, nor Sea;
 But in the strong recess of Harmony,
 Established firm abides the rounded Sphere,
 Exultant in surrounding solitude.

27a.

Nor faction nor fight unseemly in its limbs.

28.

The Sphere on every side the boundless same,
 Exultant in surrounding solitude.

29.

For from its back there swing no branching arms,
 It hath no feet nor knees alert, nor form

Of life-producing member,—on all sides
A sphere it was, and like unto itself.

30.

Yet after mighty Strife had waxen great
Within the members of the Sphere, and rose
To her own honors, as the times arrived
Which unto each in turn, to Strife, to Love,
Should come by amplest oath and old decree...

31.

For one by one did quake the limbs of God.

Physical Analogies.

32.

The joint binds two.

33.

But as when rennet of the fig-tree juice
Curdles the white milk, and will bind it fast...

34.

Cementing meal with water...

The Conquest of Love.

35.

But hurrying back, I now will make return
To paths of festal song, laid down before,
Draining each flowing thought from flowing thought.
When down the Vortex to the last abyss
Had foundered Hate, and Lovingness had reached
The eddying center of the Mass, behold
Around her into Oneness gathered all.
Yet not a-sudden, but only as willingly
Each from its several region joined with each;
And from their mingling thence are poured abroad
The multitudinous tribes of mortal things.
Yet much unmixed among the mixed remained,
As much as Hate still held in scales aloft.
For not all blameless did Hate yield and stand
Out yonder on the circle's utmost bounds;
But partwise yet within he stayed, partwise
Was he already from the members gone.

And ever the more he skulked away and fled,
 Then ever the more, and nearer, inward pressed
 The gentle minded, the divine Desire
 Of blameless Lovingness. Thence grew apace
 Those mortal Things, erstwhile long wont to be
 Immortal, and the erstwhile pure and sheer
 Were mixed, exchanging highways of new life,
 And from their mingling thence are poured abroad
 The multitudinous tribes of mortal things,
 Knit in all forms and wonderful to see.

36.

And as they came together, Hate began
 To take his stand far on the outer verge.

Similia similibus.

37.

And Earth through Earth her figure magnifies,
 And Air through Air.

The World as It Now Is.

38.

Come! I will name the like-primeval Four,
 Whence rose to sight all things we now behold—
 Earth, many-billowed Sea, and the moist Air,
 And Aether, the Titan, who binds the globe about.

Earth and Air Not Illimitable.

39.

If Earth's black deeps were endless, and o'er-full
 Were the white Ether, as forsooth some tongues
 Have idly prated in the babbling mouths
 Of those who little of the All have seen...

Sun and Moon.

40.

Keen-darting Helios and Selene mild.

41.

But the sun's fires, together gathered, move
 Attendant round the mighty space of heaven.

42.

And the sun's beams
The moon, in passing under, covers o'er,
And darkens a bleak tract of earth as large
As is the breadth of her, the silver-eyed.

43.

As sunbeam striking on the moon's broad disk.

44.

Toward Olympos back he darts his beams,
With fearless face.

45.

Round earth revolves a disk of alien light.

46.

Even as revolves a chariot's nave, which round
The outmost...

47.

For toward the sacred circle of her lord
She gazes face to face.

48.

But earth makes night for beams of sinking sun.

The Darkling Night.

49.

Of night, the lonely, with her sightless eyes.

Wind and Rain.

50.

Iris from sea brings wind or mighty rain.

Fire.

51.

And fire sprang upward with a rending speed.

The Volcano.

52.

And many a fire there burns beneath the ground.

Air.

53.

For sometimes so upon its course it met,
And oftentimes otherwise.

Things Passing Strange.

54.

In Earth sank Ether with deep-stretching roots.

55.

Earth's sweat, the sea.

56.

The salt grew solid, smit by beams of sun.

Strange Creatures of Olden Times.

57.

There budded many a head without a neck,
And arms were roaming, shoulderless and bare,
And eyes that wanted foreheads drifted by.

58.

In isolation wandered every limb,
Hither and thither seeking union meet.

59.

But now as God with God was mingled more,
These members fell together where they met,
And many a birth besides was then begot
In a long line of ever varied life.

60.

Creatures of countless hands and trailing feet.

61.

Many were born with twofold brow and breast,
Some with the face of man on bovine stock,
Some with man's form beneath a bovine head,
Mixed shapes of being with shadowed secret parts,
Sometimes like men, and sometimes woman-growths.

62.

But come! now hear how 'twas the sundered Fire
Led into life the germs, erst whelmed in night,

Of men and women, the pitied and bewailed ;
 For 'tis a tale that sees and knows its mark.
 First rose mere lumps of earth with rude impress,
 That had their shares of Water and of Warm.
 These then by Fire (in upward zeal to reach
 Its kindred Fire in heaven) were shot aloft,
 Albeit not yet had they revealed a form
 Of lovely limbs, nor yet a human cry,
 Nor secret member, common to the male.

The Process of Human Generation To-day.

63.

But separate is the birth of human limbs ;
 For 'tis in part in man's . . .

64.

Love-longing comes, reminding him who sees.

65.

Into clean wombs the seeds are poured, and when
 Therein they meet with Cold, the birth is girls ;
 And boys, when contrariwise they meet with Warm.

66.

Into the cloven meads of Aphrodite.

67.

For bellies with the warmer wombs become
 Mothers of boys, and therefore men are dark,
 More stalwart and more shaggy.

68.

On the tenth day, in month the eighth, the blood
 Becomes white pus.

69.

Twice bearing.

70.

Sheepskin.

On Animals and Plants.

71.

And if belief lack pith, and thou still doubt
 How from the mingling of the elements,

The Earth and Water, the Ether and the Sun,
So many forms and hues of mortal things
Could thus have being, as have come to be,
Each framed and knit by Aphrodite's power...

72.

As the tall trees and fish in briny floods.

73.

As Kypris, after watering Earth with Rain,
Zealous to heat her, then did give Earth o'er
To speed of Fire that then she might grow firm.

74.

Leading the songless shoals of spawning fish.

75.

Of beasts, inside compact with outsides loose,
Which, in the palms of Aphrodite shaped,
Got this their sponginess.

76.

'Tis thus with conchs upon the heavy chines
Of ocean-dwellers, aye, of shell-fish wreathed,
Or stony-hided turtles, where thou mark'st
The earthen crust outside the softer parts.

77-78.

Trees bore perennial fruit, perennial fronds,
Laden with fruit the whole revolving year,
Since fed forever by a fruitful air.

79.

Thus first tall olives lay their yellow eggs.

80.

Wherefore pomegranates slow in ripening be,
And apples grow so plentiful in juice.

81.

Wine is but water fermented in the wood,
And issues from the rind.

82.

From the same stuff on sturdy limbs grow hair,
Leaves, scales of fish, and birds' thick-feathered plumes.

83.

Stiff hairs, keen-piercing, bristle on the chines
Of hedge-hogs.

Our Eyes.

84.

As when a man, about to sally forth,
Prepares a light and kindles him a blaze
Of flaming fire against the wintry night,
In horny lantern shielding from all winds;
Though it protect from breath of blowing winds,
Its beam darts outward, as more fine and thin,
And with untiring rays lights up the sky:
Just so the Fire primeval once lay hid
In the round pupil of the eye, enclosed
In films and gauzy veils, which through and through
Were pierced with pores divinely fashioned,
And thus kept off the watery deeps around,
Whilst Fire burst outward, as more fine and thin.

85.

The gentle flame of eye did chance to get
Only a little of the earthen part.

86.

From which by Aphrodite, the divine,
The untiring eyes were formed.

87.

Thus Aphrodite wrought with bolts of love.

88.

One vision of two eyes is born.

Similia similibus.

89.

Knowing that all things have their emanations.

90.

Thus Sweet seized Sweet, Bitter on Bitter flew,
Sour sprung for Sour, and upon Hot rode Hot.

91.

Water to wine more nearly is allied,
But will not mix with oil.

92.

As when one mixes with the copper tin.

93.

With flax is mixed the silvery elder's seed.

The Black River Bottoms.

94.

And the black color of the river's deeps
Comes all from shade; and one may see the same
In hollow caves.

Eyes.

95.

As, in the palms of Kypris shaped, they first
Began to grow together...

Bones.

96.

Kind Earth for her broad-breasted melting-pots,
Of the eight parts got two of Lucid Nestis,
And of Hephæstos four. Thence came white bones,
Divinely joined by glue of Harmony.

97.

The back-bone.

Blood and Flesh.

98.

And after Earth within the perfect ports
Of Aphrodite anchored lay, she met
Almost in equal parts Hephæstos red,
And Rain and Ether, the all-splendorous
(Though one or other were a little more,
Perchance, a little less, than Earth). From these
There came our blood and all the shapes of flesh.

The Ear.

99.

A bell... a fleshy twig.

The Rushing Blood and the Clepsydra.

100.

And thus does all breathe in and out. In all,
 Over the body's surface, bloodless tubes
 Of flesh are stretched, and, at their outlets, rifts
 Innumerable along the outmost rind
 Are bored; and so the blood remains within;
 For air, however, is cut a passage free.
 And when from here the thin blood backward streams,
 The air comes rushing in with roaring swell;
 But when again it forward leaps, the air
 In turn breathes out; as when a little girl
 Plays with a water-clock of gleaming bronze:
 As long as ever the opening of the pipe
 Is by her pretty fingers stopped and closed,
 And thuswise plunged within the yielding mass
 Of silvery water, can the Wet no more
 Get in the vessel; but the air's own weight,
 That falls inside against the countless holes,
 Keeps it in check, until the child at last
 Uncovers and sets free the thickened air,
 When of a truth the water's destined bulk
 Gets in, as air gives way. Even so it is,
 When in the belly of the brazen clock
 The water lies, and the girl's finger tip
 Shuts pipe and tube: the air, that from without
 Comes pressing inward, holds the water back
 About the gateways of the gurgling neck,
 As the child keeps possession of the top,
 Until her hand will loosen, when amain—
 Quite contrariwise to way and wise before—
 Pours out and under the water's destined bulk,
 As air drops down and in. Even so it is
 With the thin blood that through our members drives:
 When hurrying back it streams to inward, then
 Amain a flow of air comes rushing on;
 But when again it forward leaps, the air
 In turn breathes out along the selfsame way.

Scent.

101.

Sniffing with nostrils mites from wild beasts' limbs...
Left by their feet along the tender grass...

102.

And thus got all things share of breath and smells.

On the Psychic Life.

103.

Thus all things think their thought by will of Chance.

104.

And in so far the lightest at their fall
Do strike together...

105.

In the blood-streams, back-leaping unto it,
The heart is nourished, where prevails the power
That men call thought; for lo the blood that stirs
About the heart is man's controlling thought.

106.

For unto men their thrift of reason grows,
According to the body's thrift and state.

107.

For as of these commingled all things are,
Even so through these men think, rejoice, or grieve.

108.

As far as mortals change by day, so far
By night their thinking changes...

109.

For 'tis through Earth that Earth we do behold,
Through Ether, divine Ether luminous,
Through Water, Water, through Fire, devouring Fire,
And Love through Love, and Hate through doleful
Hate.

110.

For if reliant on a spirit firm,
With inclination and endeavor pure,

Thou wilt behold them, all these things shall be
 Forever thine, for service, and besides
 Thereof full many another shalt thou gain;
 For of themselves into that core they grow
 Of each man's nature, where his essence lies.
 But if for others thou wilt look and reach—
 Such empty treasures, myriad and vile,
 As men be after, which forevermore
 Blunt soul and keen desire—O then shall these
 Most swiftly leave thee as the seasons roll;
 For all their yearning is a quick return
 Unto their own primeval stock. For know:
 All things have fixed intent and share of thought.

Dominion.

III.

And thou shalt master every drug that e'er
 Was made defense 'gainst sickness and old age—
 For thee alone all this I will fulfil—
 And thou shalt calm the might of tireless winds,
 That burst on earth and ruin seedlands; aye,
 And if thou wilt, shalt thou arouse the blasts,
 And watch them take their vengeance, wild and shrill,
 For that before thou cowedst them. Thou shalt change
 Black rain to drought, at seasons good for men,
 And the long drought of summer shalt thou change
 To torrents, nourishing the mountain trees,
 As down they stream from ether. And thou shalt
 From Hades beckon the might of perished men.

THE PURIFICATIONS.

The Healer and Prophet.

II2.

Ye friends, who in the mighty city dwell
 Along the yellow Acragas hard by
 The Acropolis, ye stewards of good works,
 The stranger's refuge venerable and kind,
 All hail, O friends! But unto ye I walk
 As god immortal now, no more as man,
 On all sides honored fittingly and well,

Crowned both with fillets and with flowering wreaths.
 When with my throngs of men and women I come
 To thriving cities, I am sought by prayers,
 And thousands follow me that they may ask
 The path to weal and vantage, craving some
 For oracles, whilst others seek to hear
 A healing word 'gainst many a foul disease
 That all too long hath pierced with grievous pains.

113.

Yet why urge more, as if forsooth I wrought
 Some big affair—do I not far excel
 The mortals round me, doomed to many deaths!

114.

O friends, I know indeed in these the words
 Which I will speak that very truth abides;
 But greatly troublous unto men alway
 Hath been the emulous struggle of Belief
 To reach their bosoms.

Expiation and Metempsychosis.

115.

There is a word of Fate, an old decree
 And everlasting of the gods, made fast
 With amplest oaths, that whosoe'er of those
 Far spirits, with their lot of age-long life,
 Do foul their limbs with slaughter in offense,
 Or swear forsworn, as failing of their pledge,
 Shall wander thrice ten thousand weary years
 Far from the Blessed, and be born through time
 In various shapes of mortal kind, which change
 Ever and ever paths of troublous life:
 For now Air hunts them onward to the Sea;
 Now the wild Sea disgorges them on Land;
 Now Earth will spue toward beams of radiant Sun;
 Whence he will toss them back to whirling Air—
 Each gets from other what they all abhor.
 And in that brood I too am numbered now,
 A fugitive and vagabond from heaven,
 As one obedient unto raving Strife.

116.

Charis abhors intolerable Fate.

117.

For I was once already boy and girl,
Thicket and bird, and mute fish in the waves.

This Earth of Ours.

118.

I wept and wailed, beholding the strange place.

119.

From what large honor and what height of bliss
Am I here fallen to move with mortal kind!

This Sky-Roofed World.

120.

And then we came unto a roofèd cave.

This Vale of Tears.

121.

A joyless land,
Where Slaughter and Grudge, and troops of Dooms
besides,
Where shriveled Diseases and obscene Decays,
And Labors, burdened with the water-jars,
Do wander down the dismal meads of Bane.

122.

There was Earth-mother,
There the far-peering Virgin of the Sun,
And bloody Quarrel and grave-eyed Harmony,
And there was Fair and Foul and Speed and Late,
Black-haired Confusion and sweet maiden Sure.

123.

Growth and Decay, and Sleep and Roused-from-sleep,
Action and Rest, and Glory many-crowned,
And Filth, and Silence and prevailing Voice.

124.

O mortal kind! O ye poor sons of grief!
From such contentions and such sighings sprung!

The Changing Forms.

125.

For from the living he the dead did make,
Their forms exchanging. . .

126.

All things doth Nature change, enwrapping souls
In unfamiliar tunics of the flesh.

127.

The worthiest dwellings for the souls of men,
When 'tis their lot to live in forms of brutes,
Are tawny lions, those great beasts that sleep
Couched on the black earth up the mountain side ;
But, when in forms of beautiful plumed trees
They live, the bays are worthiest for souls.

The Golden Age.

128.

Nor unto them
Was any Ares god, nor Kydoimos,
Nor Zeus, the king of gods, nor Kronos, nor
Poseidon then, but only Kypris queen. . .
Whom they with holy gifts were wont to appease,
With painted images of living things,
With costly unguents of rich fragrancý,
With gentle sacrifice of taintless myrrh,
With redolent fumes of frankincense, of old
Pouring libations out upon the ground
Of yellow honey ; not then with unmixed blood
Of many bulls was ever an altar stained ;
But among men 'twas sacrilege most vile
To reave of life and eat the goodly limbs.

The Sage.

129.

Was one among them there, a supreme man
Of vastest knowledge, gainer of large wealth
Of understanding, and chief master wise
Of diverse works of skill and wisdom all ;
For whensoever he sought with scope and reach

Of understanding, then 'twas his to view
 Readily each and every thing that e'er
 In ten or twenty human ages throve.

Those days.

130.

All things were tame, and gentle toward men,
 All beasts and birds, and friendship's flame blew fair.

The Divine.

131.

For since, O Muse undying, thou couldst deign
 To give for these our paltry human cares
 A gateway to thy soul, O now much more,
 Kalliope of the beautiful dear voice,
 Be near me now beseeching!—whilst I speak
 Excelling thoughts about the blessed gods.

132.

O well with him who hath secured his wealth
 Of thoughts divine, O wretched he whose care
 Is shadowy speculation on the gods!

133.

We may not bring It near us with our eyes,
 We may not grasp It with our human hands,
 With neither hands nor eyes, those highways twain
 Whereby Belief drops into minds of men.

134.

For 'tis adorned with never a manlike head,
 For from Its back there swing no branching arms,
 It hath no feet nor knees alert, nor form
 Of tufted secret member; but It lives,
 One holy mind, ineffable, alone,
 And with swift thoughts darts through the universe.

135.

But the wide law of all extends throughout
 Broad-ruling ether and the vast white sky.

Animal Sacrifice.

136.

Will ye not cease from this great din of slaughter?
 Will ye not see, unthinking as ye are,
 How ye rend one another unbeknown?

137.

The father lifteth for the stroke of death
 His own dear son within a changèd form,
 And slits his throat for sacrifice with prayers—
 A blinded fool! But the poor victims press,
 Imploring their destroyers. Yet not one
 But still is deaf to piteous moan and wail.
 Each slits the throat and in his halls prepares
 A horrible repast. Thus too the son
 Seizes the father, children the mother seize,
 And reave of life and eat their own dear flesh.

138.

Drawing the soul as water with the bronze.

139.

Ah woe is me! that never a pitiless day
 Destroyed me long ago, ere yet my lips
 Did meditate this feeding's monstrous crime!

Taboos.

140.

Withhold your hands from leaves of Phœbus' tree!

141.

Ye wretched, O ye altogether wretched,
 Withhold your hands from beans!

Sin.

142.

Neither roofed halls of ægis-holding Zeus
 Delight it, nor dire Hecate's venging house.

143.

Scooping from fountains five with lasting bronze.

144.

O fast from evil-doing.

145.

Since wildered by your evil-doings huge,
Ne'er shall ye free your life from heavy pains.

The Progression of Rebirth.

146.

And seers at last, and singers of high hymns,
Physicians sage, and chiefs o'er earth-born men
Shall they become, whence germinate the gods,
The excellent in honors.

147.

At hearth and feast companioned with the immortals,
From human pains and wasting eld immune.

Last Echoes of a Song Half Lost.

148.

Man-enfolding Earth.

149.

The cloud-collecting.

150.

The blood-full liver.

151.

Life-giving.

152.

Evening, the day's old age.

153.

The belly.

153a.

In seven times seven days.

WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD.

MADISON, WIS.